



## A MESSAGE FROM

### Superintendent Brian C. Monahan

#### *Happy New Year!*

We are looking to 2019 as another great year for all our students as we work to provide them with the highest quality education.

In alignment with our mission, we've made a concerted effort to focus on character education because of its importance to our students' social and emotional development. In this newsletter, we're happy to share highlights of what our schools are doing to help our students become the best they can be and contribute to our positive school culture.

Please know that we remain committed to being responsive to any questions you may have and welcome your thoughts.

With best wishes for a happy, healthy and prosperous 2019!

For more information visit  
[www.minisink.com](http://www.minisink.com)

## A kinder learning community

Parents always remind their children about the importance of being kind, and the Minisink Valley Central School District is reinforcing this important tenet this year through its many diversity and kindness initiatives.

"Character education, social and emotional development and learning are important components in the teaching of the whole child," said Superintendent Brian C. Monahan.

The State Education Department defines social and emotional development and learning (SEDL) as "promoting positive relationships; self-directing and collaborating skills; getting along in a pluralistic community; avoiding risky behaviors; and finding help when feeling sad and lonely."

Reinforcing the importance of being kind may initially sound simplistic. But in reality, doing so provides long-term, positive outcomes.

### Thus far, in our schools...

**Otisville Elementary School's** year theme is "Otisville Students are Superheroes" and centers around students being respectful, responsible and ready to learn. An example is the implementation of the evidence-based Second Step Program, which develops K-5 social emotional learning. Related skills include empathy, emotions management, friendship and problem solving.

**Minisink Valley Elementary School** has chosen "Be Kind" as its theme. Weekly announcements focus on how students and faculty can choose kindness through a daily word or action. A series of school assemblies focused on anti-bullying. Faculty and staff wear "Be Kind" t-shirts every Friday. A recent school-wide trip to the Paramount Theater promoted inclusiveness.

**The intermediate school** is making kindness an integral part of its daily culture. The first day of school set the tone with an assembly



**"Character education is an important part of students' social and emotional development. These intermediate school students remind us that kindness matters."** – Superintendent Brian C. Monahan

focused on kindness expectations. Ongoing school-wide programs center on bullying prevention and the Dignity for All Students Act (DASA). To reach students through a variety of media, the school is also screening films such as "Wonder," the story of a boy with facial differences attending a mainstream elementary school for the first time.

**The middle school's** yearlong theme is "Choosing Kindness." Each month, this idea is incorporated into assemblies, presentations and activities to promote the value and importance of diversity, inclusiveness and respect. Assemblies continuously focus on peer pressure, gossip and other forms of intolerance along with the concepts of forgiveness and being sorry. These themes are also incorporated into classroom project work.

**The high school** created a new task force focused on "Choosing Kindness" and is developing and finalizing plans to incorporate this theme into daily activities, instruction and events.

**Board of Education**

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**Superintendent of Schools**

Brian C. Monahan

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## RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER

## Announcing Phase II of Capital Project

### Overview of Phase I

Last summer's capital project construction focused on the elementary and intermediate school buildings at the Minisink campus. Original vinyl asbestos tile was removed from 25 classrooms and replaced with bright, new vinyl (non-asbestos) tile. Sections of the exterior slate-wall system were replaced with a new, insulated façade to improve energy efficiency and appearance.

### Summer 2019 Construction

*Phase II involves the construction of the new high school cafeteria and new sewer treatment plant.*

The new cafeteria building will create a multi-purpose area for large-group instruction and events, increase seating capacity, help reduce wait-times during lunch periods, and lessen hallway congestion during class changes.

The new, larger facility will extend an addition in the rear of the high school building, facing the back parking lot, and feature tiered indoor-outdoor areas for student activities and district functions. A solar-panel roof system will help offset utility costs and provide a solar-technology learning station for students.

Once the new cafeteria is completed and operational, the existing cafeteria/kitchen space



will be repurposed to house new programs and courses such as culinary arts, photography, media production and computer labs — as well as storage for drama club productions, and two small conference rooms.

"These building projects will allow us to broaden our course offerings and advance our academic competency, making Minisink Valley schools more attractive to families," said high school Principal Ken Hauck. "We are expanding and modernizing instructional spaces that open new career and higher education pathways for all our students."

During July and August, changes to parking and the temporary relocation of high school administration offices are planned. These changes will be communicated with advance notice and clearly marked, as they are implemented.

"We appreciate the understanding and flexibility of the school community knowing any disruptions will yield exciting educational experiences and advantages for all Minisink Valley students," said Superintendent Brian C. Monahan.

## Rolling out New York State Next Generation Learning Standards for ELA and Math

Minisink Valley schools are rolling out the Next Generation Learning Standards (NGLS) in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics, adopted by the Board of Regents in September 2017.

The State Education Department (SED) has identified the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 school years as "capacity building" years.

"This means we are aligning district curricular materials, resources, and assessments to the new standards," said Christian Ranaudo, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction. "Instructional strategies will be examined to ensure they are research-based and aligned with the standards."

Building leadership, supported by the Office of Curriculum and Instruction and Office of Professional Learning, is preparing faculty to implement the new standards into classroom instruction. SED is also developing communication tools to advise parents about the standards and additional educational resources for English Language Learners and students with disabilities.

The NGLS detail what students should know and accomplish at each grade level, but they don't require school districts to follow specific curricula. Until they are fully implemented, the annual two-day assessments for ELA and math in grades 3 through 8 will continue to be based on the current Common Core Learning Standards.

## TAX EXEMPTION REMINDER/ BUDGET INFORMATION

### EXEMPTIONS REMINDER

STAR applications can be obtained online at [www.tax.ny.gov](http://www.tax.ny.gov) or at your local tax assessor's office. The Enhanced STAR Income Verification Program (IVP) enrollment deadline is March 1.

### BUDGET DEVELOPMENT CALENDAR

Finance Committee meetings are open to the public and will take place at 6:30 p.m., prior to the Board of Education meetings, on Feb. 7, 21; and March 7, 21.